

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7383

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PDIP, EAID, GB, YO

SUBJ: YUGOSLAV DELEGATION VISITS GABON

REF: 75 LIBREVILLE 0512

1. EIGHTEEN-MEMBER YUGOSLAV DELEGATION HEADED BY VICE PRESIDENT OF FEDERAL COMMITTEE FOR RELATIONS WITH DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AVDO ZNOVIC VISITED GABON FEB. 2-7. DELEGATION CAME AS FOLLOW-UP TO PRESIDENT BONGO'S STATE VISIT TO YUGOSLAVIA IN APRIL 1975 DURING WHICH THREE BILATERAL COOPERATION AGREEMENTS WERE SIGNED.

2. SINCE THAT VISIT MAJOR YUGOSLAV PROJECT UNDERTAKEN IN GABON IS CONSTRUCTION OF NEW LIBREVILLE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTER BY STATE COMPANY ENERGO PROJEKT. IN PRESS INTERVIEW PUBLISHED FEB. 10, ZNOVIC STATED THAT THIS CONTRACT NOW ENLARGED TO INCLUDE RECEPTION CENTER NEXT TO CONVENTION CENTER. ZNOVIC ALSO BOASTED THAT CONVENTION CENTER WILL BE COMPLETED IN JULY, EIGHT MONTHS AHEAD OF SCHEDULE.

3. PRESS ALSO REPORTED THAT GOG HAD PROPOSED PROJECTS TO YUGOSLAV DELEGATION IN DEVELOPMENT OF WOOD INDUSTRY, HYDROELECTRIC POWER, AGRICULTURE, TECHNICAL TRAINING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT. ZNOVIC IN INTERVIEW ALSO MENTIONED THAT HIS
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DELEGATIONHAD STUDIED EXPANSION OF HYDROELECTRIC COMPLEX AT

KINGUELE SITE WHICH SUPPLIES POWER TO LIBREVILLE AND THAT YUGOSLAV WOOD PROCESSING COMPLEX WAS ALREADY BEING INSTALLED IN AREA WHERE GOG HAD GRANTED THEM FOREST EXPLOITATION CONCESSIONS.

4. FINALLY ZNOVIC STATED THAT GABONESE-YUGOSLAV COMMISSION CALLED FOR IN BILATERAL AGREEMENTS WOULD BEGIN TO FUNCTION WITHIN TWO MONTHS AND THAT FINAL DECISION HAD BEEN TAKEN BY YUGOSLAV GOVERNMENT ON JANUARY 29 TO OPEN EMBASSY IN LIBREVILLE AT UNSPECIFIED DATE.

5. COMMENT: ZNOVIC WAS CAREFUL TO POINT OUT IN INTERVIEW THAT WHILE YUGOSLAVS HAVE MUCH TECHNICAL EXPERTISE AND EXPERIENCE VALUABLE TO GABON, LIMITING FACTOR IN LEVEL OF COOPERATION WAS MEANS OF FINANCING PROJECTS. THIS APPROACH IS APPARENT IN NATURE OF CURRENT AND PROPOSED YUGOSLAV PROJECTS WHICH APPEAR TO BE STRAIGHT BUSINESS DEALS MORE THAN CONCESSIONARY DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE.

6. ANNOUNCEMENT OF OPENING OF YUGOSLAV EMBASSY COMES AS NO SURPRISE SINCE THIS HAD BEEN DECIDED DURING BONGO'S STATE VISIT LAST APRIL. FOR BELGRADE: WOULD APPRECIATE ANY AVAILABLE INFORMATION ON TIMING OF EMBASSY OPENING AND INDIVIDUALS SELECTED TO STAFF IT. STEIGMAN

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